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NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE

23373 7590 08/10/2009
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
SUITE 800
WASHINGTON, DC 20037

EXAMINER

HU, HENRY S

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1796

DATE MAILED: 08/10/2009

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/519,198	12/23/2004	Ken Yoshimura	Q85156	4526

TITLE OF INVENTION: POLYMERIC LAMINATES, PROCESSES FOR PRODUCING THE SAME, AND USE THEREOF

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	NO	\$1510	\$300	\$0	\$1810	11/10/2009

THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. **PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED.** THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.

THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN **THREE MONTHS** FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. **THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED.** SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE DOES NOT REFLECT A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE IN THIS APPLICATION. IF AN ISSUE FEE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PAID IN THIS APPLICATION (AS SHOWN ABOVE), THE RETURN OF PART B OF THIS FORM WILL BE CONSIDERED A REQUEST TO REAPPLY THE PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE TOWARD THE ISSUE FEE NOW DUE.

HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

A. If the status is the same, pay the TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above.

B. If the status above is to be removed, check box 5b on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and twice the amount of the ISSUE FEE shown above, or

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

A. Pay TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above, or

B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check box 5a on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL, or its equivalent, must be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted. If an equivalent of Part B is filed, a request to reapply a previously paid issue fee must be clearly made, and delays in processing may occur due to the difficulty in recognizing the paper as an equivalent of Part B.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL

Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: Mail **Mail Stop ISSUE FEE**
Commissioner for Patents
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INSTRUCTIONS: This form should be used for transmitting the ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Blocks 1 through 5 should be completed where appropriate. All further correspondence including the Patent, advance orders and notification of maintenance fees will be mailed to the current correspondence address as indicated unless corrected below or directed otherwise in Block 1, by (a) specifying a new correspondence address; and/or (b) indicating a separate "FEE ADDRESS" for maintenance fee notifications.

CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS (Note: Use Block 1 for any change of address)

Note: A certificate of mailing can only be used for domestic mailings of the Fee(s) Transmittal. This certificate cannot be used for any other accompanying papers. Each additional paper, such as an assignment or formal drawing, must have its own certificate of mailing or transmission.

23373 7590 08/10/2009
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
SUITE 800
WASHINGTON, DC 20037

Certificate of Mailing or Transmission

I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO (571) 273-2885, on the date indicated below.

(Depositor's name)
(Signature)
(Date)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/519,198 12/23/2004

Ken Yoshimura

Q85156

4526

TITLE OF INVENTION: POLYMERIC LAMINATES, PROCESSES FOR PRODUCING THE SAME, AND USE THEREOF

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	NO	\$1510	\$300	\$0	\$1810	11/10/2009

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
HU, HENRY S	1796	429-033000

1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).

- ☐ Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.
☐ "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. Use of a **Customer Number** is required.

2. For printing on the patent front page, list

- (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, 1 _____
 (2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed. 2 _____
 3 _____

3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. If an assignee is identified below, the document has been filed for recordation as set forth in 37 CFR 3.11. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE

(B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY)

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent): ☐ Individual ☐ Corporation or other private group entity ☐ Government

4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:

- ☐ Issue Fee
☐ Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)
☐ Advance Order - # of Copies _____

4b. Payment of Fee(s): (Please first reapply any previously paid issue fee shown above)

- ☐ A check is enclosed.
☐ Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.
☐ The Director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number _____ (enclose an extra copy of this form).

5. Change in Entity Status (from status indicated above)

- ☐ a. Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27. ☐ b. Applicant is no longer claiming SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27(g)(2).

NOTE: The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant; a registered attorney or agent; or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Authorized Signature _____ Date _____
 Typed or printed name _____ Registration No. _____

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

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10/519,198	12/23/2004	Ken Yoshimura	Q85156	4526
23373	7590	08/19/2009	EXAMINER	
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC 2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W. SUITE 800 WASHINGTON, DC 20037			HU, HENRY S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1796	

DATE MAILED: 08/10/2009

Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b) (application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment to date is 764 day(s). If the issue fee is paid on the date that is three months after the mailing date of this notice and the patent issues on the Tuesday before the date that is 28 weeks (six and a half months) after the mailing date of this notice, the Patent Term Adjustment will be 764 day(s).

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (<http://pair.uspto.gov>).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at 1-(888)-786-0101 or (571)-272-4200.

Notice of Allowability**Application No.**

10/519,198

Examiner

HENRY S. HU

Applicant(s)

YOSHIMURA ET AL.

Art Unit

1796

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Response of April 22, 2009.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-17, 26 and 27.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: ____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date ____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date ____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other ____.

1. This application is in condition for allowance except for the presence of **Claims 18-25 (Groups II-IV), which is non-elected without traverse** as filed on July 21, 2008. Accordingly, Claims 18-25 has been cancelled. An action follows.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The examiner has cancelled the above-mentioned Claims 18-25, which is **non-elected without traverse** by Attorney Ryan C. Cady (registration # 56,762) on July 21, 2008.

Claims 18-25 are cancelled.

The Examiner has also amended the claim dependency of Claim 26 to be on Claim 1 only accordingly.

Claim 26 at line 2 please remove the phrase of "or 18"

DETAILED ACTION

3. This Office Action is in response to **Response** (not an amendment) filed on April 22, 2009, which is in response to Non-Final office action dated October 28, 2008. With such a

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response, no claim is amended, cancelled or added. The examiner's amendment has cancelled the above-mentioned **Claims 18-25 (Groups II-IV)**, which is non-elected without traverse by Attorney Ryan C. Cady (registration # 56,762) on July 21, 2008. **Claims 1-17 and 26-27** with only one independent claim (Claim 1) are now pending. An action follows.

4. Claim rejections in previous Non-Final Office Action filed on October 28, 2008 are now removed for the reasons given in paragraphs 5-12 thereafter.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 1-17 and 26-27 are allowed.

6. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The above Claims 1-17 and 26-27 are allowed over the closest references:

7. The limitation of parent **Claim 1** relates to a laminated membrane comprising two membranes including: (A) a **membrane (I)** which comprises aromatic polymer electrolyte containing a super strong acid group and (B) a **membrane (II)** which comprises one electrolyte selected from the group consisting of perfluoroalkylsulfonic acid polymer electrolytes and non-super strong acid polymer electrolytes.

See other limitations of dependent Claims 2-17 and 26-27.

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8. The making of **laminated membrane composition** is achieved by comprising **two** different membranes (Membrane I and Membrane II) in parent **Claim 1**. In a close comparison, **Membrane I** is related to an aromatic polymer electrolyte containing super strong acid groups as specified in Claims 5 and 6. For instance, said **super strong acid directly attaching on aromatic ring is selected from four different formulas such as (2a) sulfonic acid, (2b) disulfonimide, (2c) phosphonic acid, and (2d) phosphonic acid ester**. **Membrane II** is different from Membrane I and is related to a regular perfluoroalkyl sulfonic acid-containing polymer electrolyte, which said sulfonic acid group is a pendant group on the perfluoroaliphatic backbone and is thereby NOT directly attaching on the aromatic ring.

9. A combination of two references including **Yoshimura and Hodgdon** cannot teach or suggest such a subject matter as following: As discussed in non-final office action filed on October 28, 2009, **Yoshimura is only silent about put such two different PEM membranes laminated together** as instant parent Claim 1. The rejection is depending on the use of other reference **Hodgdon** to teach such a subject matter.

10. As exactly pointed out by Applicants and the Examiner agrees, the international filing date of the present application is June 18, 2003. However, Yoshimura et al. was filed in the U.S. on March 25, 2003, and published on September 25, 2003. Hence, Yoshimura et al. only qualifies as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(c). Moreover, the subject matter of the instant application and that described in Yoshimura et al were, at the time the invention was made,

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owned by, or subject to an obligation of assignment to, the same person, namely, SUMITOMO CHEMICAL COMPANY, LIMITED. Without admitting that the rejection is appropriate, Yoshimura et al. is thus disqualified as a § 102(c) reference via 35 U.S.C. § 103(c), and cannot be used in the obviousness rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

11. **Hodgdon** only discloses that in the course of making a bipolar laminated membrane, two different polarity PEM membranes are laminated together. One membrane is related to anion exchange membrane, while the other one is related to cation exchange membrane (see abstract, line 1-7; column 3, line 1 – column 6, line 34). By doing so, a constant water supply to the bipolar interface and also better stability is found on PEM membrane may be effectively achieved (see column 2, line 50-55). Therefore, **Hodgdon cannot fix the above-mentioned deficiency of Yoshimura** on the date problem.

12. In summary, in the absence of Yoshimura as a reference, the Office does not present a *prima facie* case for obviousness. Hence, this rejection is now withdrawn by Examiner.

13. After further examination and search, the examiner found the following prior art did not teach the claimed limitation:

US 7,128,993 B2 to Barnwell et al. only discloses the making of some composite (laminated) membranes comprising: (A) **at least one ion-conducting polymer** and (B) a network of randomly oriented individual fibers. See abstract, line 1-4; column 1, line 34-38. Although the laminated structure may be formed by several layers, the claimed membrane I by using aromatic polymer is not disclosed or suggested. See column 3, line 38 – column 4, line 47. Therefore, Barnwell fails to teach or fairly suggest the laminated membrane of present Claim 1.

14. As of the date of this office action, the examiner has not located or identified any reference that can be used singularly or in combination with another reference including the above references to render the present invention anticipated or obvious to one of the ordinary skill in the art. Therefore, the one independent **Claim 1** is allowed for the reason listed above. Since the prior art of record fails to teach the present invention, the remaining pending dependent **Claims 2-17 and 26-27** are passed to issue.

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communication from the examiner should be directed to **Dr. Henry S. Hu whose telephone number is (571) 272-1103**. The examiner can be reached on Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM –5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dr. Vasu Jagannathan, can be reached on (571) 272-1119. The fax number for the

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organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300 for all regular communications.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Peter D. Mulcahy/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1796

/Henry S. Hu/
Examiner, Art Unit 1796

August 3, 2009